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# HOUSE FOCUSING ON IMPROVING PERFORMANCE OF DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

*~Members Focused on Increasing Quality of Care~*

**TALLAHASSEE, FL** – This afternoon, the House Health Care Regulation Committee released PCB HCR 10-03 relating to the reorganization of the Department of Health. This bill aims to refocus the mission of the Department by streamlining and prioritizing public health functions in order to create greater efficiency and accountability while increasing the quality of care for Floridians.

The bill focuses the Department on seven core health care functions- surveillance of communicable disease, implementation of interventions that prevent or limit the spread of disease, preparedness functions related to public health emergencies, regulation of environmental activities impacting the state, administration of health and related services to target populations, collection and management of vital statistics data, and regulation of health care practitioners. The legislation also requires the Department to submit a new department structure that includes a reduction in the number of divisions, bureaus and executive positions.

“We want to make sure that the department’s mission is focused on providing the highest quality of care possible to the citizens of our state,” said Representative Matt Hudson. “We also have a duty to ensure that the taxpayer dollars are being spent in the most responsible and efficient manner. Budgets are growing tighter and we must ensure that the department is maximizing their dollars for care.”

The Department of Health was created in 1996 with a total budget of \$1.4 billion and approximately 2,600 employees. Fourteen years later, the Department now boasts more than 17,000 employees and was authorized to spend \$2.9 billion last fiscal year, nearly a 50% increase from its original budget. The Department has grown to a sprawling organization with at least 15 major divisions, more than 45 bureaus and offices, holding responsibility for regulating 57 professions, managing 67 health departments, and an undeterminable number of programs and initiatives.

The PCB will be heard on Monday, March 22, 2010 in the Health Care Regulation Committee.

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